



The Fly-By

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Southwest Region

October, 2009



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The Fly-By is published quarterly on the first month of each quarter. Deadline for submissions are:

1Q – 20 December

2Q – 20 March

3Q – 20 June

4Q – 20 September

Text may be submitted in the body of an e-mail (preferred) or as a document attached to an e-mail (a text file or, if generated in a word processor, saved in .RTF format).

Images must be in JPG format, un-retouched, un-cropped, and at least 1200 by 900 pixels.

Credits: In all cases, please give full grade, name and unit of assignment of

1. The article's author,
2. Photographer, and
3. Any person mentioned in the article.

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Send submissions to the Editor at:

awoodgate@austin.rr.com

Message size limit: 20 MB

News Highlights From Around the Region

The third quarter of 2009 was exciting for Southwest Region, having offered the **Southwest Region Staff College** at Kirtland AFB, N.M. as well as sponsored the well-attended **2009 Annual Conference and National Board**, hosted by Texas Wing in San Antonio, Texas.

New Mexico Wing did well during its OPSEVAL, earning an overall rating of Excellent, overcoming all tricks and obstacles in pursuit of its directed mission. The Air Force evaluators were well pleased, and everyone enjoyed the chance to show what they could do.

Louisiana Wing had a change of command ceremony, as Col. Mike DuBois stepped down due to increased demands of his employment. He served the wing exceptionally well and with distinction. His Vice Commander, Lt. Col. Cecil "Art" Scarbrough assumed command on Sept. 5. We thank Col. DuBois for his service, and congratulate now Col. "Art" Scarbrough, wishing them both every success. Also, Louisiana Wing's **Training Academy**, a yearly tradition, was well attended and a great success.

Of note was **Texas Wing's** hosting of the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board in San Antonio, Texas. To all accounts, attendees were extremely pleased with the chosen location and the wing's hospitality. The **Brownsville Composite Squadron** was selected as the **National Search and Rescue Squadron of the Year**, and C/Lt. Col. Thomas Kraft, the squadron's Cadet Commander, earned a **Certificate of Recognition for Lifesaving**.

Texas Wing was also distinguished with its 6th Unit Citation – announced on the last day of the quarter – covering the period 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2009. This award recognizes all wing members for outstanding duty performance. We congratulate their Commander, Col. Joe R. Smith, and all Texas Wing members.

Arkansas Wing had its biennial Air Force-guided training exercise with plenty of scenario changes and conflicting demands placed on its resources, as the Air Force wanted to see how they would prioritize their missions. As always, they had many cadet activities as well.

Arizona Wing had a good summer, and held its Annual Conference in September, when it offered a course on Crisis

Intervention. The wing's glider program made the news in July, and also in July Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University hosted a CAP visit that earned very high marks and praise from the attendees. At the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board, Vice Commander Maj. Jim Nova was honored as the **National PAO of the Year** for his outstanding work during 2008.

Oklahoma Wing was busy with many summer activities, including the Southwest Region National Flight Academy at Shawnee, an event reported by the wing's new PAO, as well as Texas Wing's Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, who attended the activity as the Cadet PAO. In fact, this assignment turned the tide for S.M. Howdy Stout, who asked about joining and accepted the offer to become the Oklahoma Wing PAO.

To all, our congratulations. 🇺🇸

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Safety is Priority One

Please check the revised **CAPR 62-1** and **CAPP 217** that are now posted at http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/forms_publications_regulations/

Have you taken the **Operational Risk Management** Basic, Intermediate and Advanced online courses? Please visit: <http://www.capmembers.com/safety/orm.cfm>

- Safety must be on every CAP member's mind, at all times.
- Before engaging in any CAP activity, a safety briefing must be conducted.
- Monthly, members must read The Sentinel and follow its timely advice.
<http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/safety/>
- ***Safety is our Number One Priority.***

How to Submit News Items for this Newsletter

Which Articles Are Best?

Ideally, articles should deal with a wing-wide event, preferably conducted in conjunction or coordinated with another wing (or better yet across regions).

Individual articles dealing with a subject that is of interest to a broad audience qualify as well.

Articles bylined by cadets, especially when the subject is of interest to a broad audience, are also welcome.

Do I Submit Photos?

Whenever possible, include images with your article. Do not embed images in a Word document. Instead, send in the original, un-retouched, full-size digital photos as attachments.

If You Have Article Ideas or Suggestions

If you have an article in mind but are not sure whether it would be acceptable, you need some guidance in writing it, or you would like to make a comment about the material published here, please feel free to contact the editor: awoodgate@austin.rr.com



Looking at the Future in the Face

by Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate, CAP, SWR Director of Public Affairs

DRIPPING SPRINGS, Texas – We look at the present and past, and they're solid, resolute, planted firmly in the field of time and totally impervious to change. No one can change them. The present and the past are monolithically constructed, composed of innumerable details, crafted over time by countless people and events. Who could possibly unravel them, and start over again, after the facts and relationships have been born, developed and **become**?

Humanity's dream is The Future. Capitalized like that, it is something personal, as if one were to say Roger Baxter, Henry Springfield, or Anna Priswell. Empty names all, until you meet the persons each represents. But since they're capitalized, we know they'll turn out to be people. The Future is also people, because people build it – sometimes planned, sometimes not.

What kind of person do you imagine The Future might be? Can you give it a face? Can you assign a purpose and a personality to it? Can you give it a name? It is out of such wisps of pondering that philosophers throughout the centuries have shaped their arguments, explanations, and hopes.

Let's say you've never seen a TV set, nor know that sound and pictures can be transmitted through a wired or wireless connection. Could you imagine a TV set? Could you imagine a computer so small that it can be woven into your clothing so you can wear it on your person? Well, it exists, and will be part of tomorrow's War Fighter. Could you imagine a mechanical insect no bigger than a bee that can fly into a room and transmit sound and pictures to someone who is elsewhere, some distance away? That exists too, and is the smallest UAV built.

But none of these have a face, or a personality, or a propensity for liking or disliking, loving or hating. These are impersonal objects destined to belong to an impersonal future.

And, really, what does a mighty oak tree growing in Yosemite National Park (above) have to do with this subject? It's just an allegory. This tree was born of a small acorn, grew tall and majestic, and never looked back. We cannot afford to do the same.

For some silly reason, although we've all been children once, when we grow up and reach our adulthood we seem to forget that earlier, fluid, often charming and creative condition. The mind is a fickle thing, and perhaps doesn't take pleasure in remembering those earlier, more fragile and uncertain days. Or maybe at that time gone by we suffered disappointments, and remembering them is too painful. Yet most of us have much to contribute to the early years of others.

Therefore, today, this very moment, a chance to shape The Future is given to us. Because The Future is right in front of us, in our care, waiting to be shown the right way and willing to follow the counsel of trusted mentors. The Future is in the hands of our young, and **it is** our young. This issue of **The Fly-By** is filled with the work of such talented promises.

This summer, Texas Wing's Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson reported the SWR National Flight Academy in Oklahoma and the Air Force Space Command Familiarization Course in Florida. Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr has appeared on this publication before. Both cadets reported the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board. Other cadets are showing interest in the field too. I hope you enjoy it all, as you share their vision and visit with them, below. (Photo: Public Domain) 🇺🇸



New and Important Faces

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr, CAP, Tyler Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – I had never dreamed that this might happen to me. But now it had become fact. I would be attending the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board, my one and only chance as a cadet to participate in – and staff – a National Conference hosted by my wing.

Invited by Maj. Arthur Woodgate, the Southwest Region Director of Public Affairs, I jumped at the opportunity to attend. I would be working as a Cadet PAO, reporting the events and the people participating in them. As soon as I arrived, early Thursday afternoon, I was promptly immersed in the day's busy schedule. I followed Maj. Woodgate through the intricate maze of hotel conference rooms filled with CAP's most influential members, many of whom I had the distinct honor of meeting and visiting with.

My first activity was an open-session National Board meeting and elections for vice-commander. This was my first real opportunity to see democracy in action. After two of the candidates had been eliminated, it came down to the remaining two, Col. Russell E. Chazell, the NHQ Chief of Staff, and the incumbent, Brigadier General Reggie Chitwood. After three two-way ties, Brig. Gen. Chitwood finally retained his seat by the slim margin of 35-31.

With the elections running late because of the repeated ballots, as soon as the winner emerged, members quickly recessed to prepare for the evening's CAP Opening Reception.



(Left) Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter opens the general session. (Center) Brig. Gen. Reggie Chittwood offers his candidacy to remain the National Vice Commander for another term. (Right) Cdts. 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson and Jesse Carr with National Vice Commander Brig. Gen. Reggie Chittwood.



To kick off the weekend, members boarded charter buses and headed some 30 miles outside San Antonio. The occasion was a Cessna-sponsored cook-off at the Knibbe Ranch, a Texas State historic site.

With many of us dressed in Western style, everyone enjoyed an ample meal of hamburgers, hotdogs, salad, chips and chili, with delicious *s'mores* to top it all off. After the meal, attendees tightened up their shoes, got their cameras ready, and hit the barn's dance floor for some old-fashioned line dancing.

As the dancing continued and the night wore on, the crowd began to thin as buses got started on their way back to the hotel. Many guests had to prepare for the following day's busy schedule.

The feeling of acceptance towards cadets and the understanding of our potential by senior members attending the National Conference astounded me.



Never at anytime had I experienced such marvelous respect. Senior officers did not look down on me because I am a cadet; they encouraged me, thanked me, smiled and joked with me.

Before arriving at the conference, many people had told me that I would have the chance to meet many extremely important persons. To me, until then, an important person had been the wing commander, or maybe the region commander or someone from region staff. Within a couple of hours of being at the conference, not only had I met my wing commander and region commander, but I was also introduced to the national commander, Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter. I was stunned.

But I didn't just meet Maj. Gen. Courter. I also had the chance to visit with her for a few minutes, discussing what exactly my position



as Cadet PAO entailed, and what I thought about the conference up to that moment. What amazed me was how encouraging she was, how interested in what I was doing, and how generous she was in thanking me for volunteering my time.

Cdt. 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr shows his happiness at getting a notebook computer – the Banquet's door prize – presented to him by Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter.

(Photos: Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate)

During the course of the following day, I was introduced to several wing commanders, region commanders, and members of our very distinguished NHQ Staff. I gathered business cards and e-mail addresses.

Having the opportunity to report and attend this conference has opened many doors for me. I have been able to meet several people who had valuable and unique advice for my career path considerations. I have had the pleasure of sitting in on classes taught by Air Force TIs and even the NHQ Director of Public Affairs. In addition to all that, this conference has opened my eyes. Constantly, I was filled with joy and pleasure about being able to sit and talk with senior members, laugh, joke, and express my ideas and opinions. I have never experienced such energy of acceptance from senior members towards cadets at any CAP activity.

I walked away from the conference thoroughly thrilled. I truly had a blast. I got to meet important people, was asked my advice on issues by the National Cadet Advisory Council, and even won a laptop. Yes, a free HP notebook, compliments of NHQ, via a door prize drawing at Saturday night's banquet.

At the conference, I met and was introduced to so many distinguished and honorable senior members that I cannot even begin to name them all. I was graciously given the opportunity of a lifetime. One that I feel, unfortunately, not all cadets will be able to share, participate in, or experience.

I hope our coverage of the event can give other cadets an idea of how much goes on beyond their squadrons, and even their wings. 🇺🇸



An Example of Excellence

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr, CAP, Tyler Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – On the evening of Thursday, Aug. 3rd, during the 2009 Annual Conference & National Board, I had the pleasure of meeting a current Spaatz cadet, Kate Whitacre. She and her family (also in CAP), had traveled from Indiana to the great state of Texas to attend this national event.

In conversation with her over dinner, I was unaware as to why she and her family had come to San Antonio. I had made the assumption that they had done so for the same reason as most everyone else... However, I was soon to learn that Cadet Col. Kate Whitacre had come to San Antonio to the National Conference for a very special purpose. She was to receive the National Cadet of the Year Award. It just doesn't get more prestigious than that.

When I found out the real reason, I was astonished. When I had met her, and the times we had visited afterwards, I had talked to her just as I would have talked to any other cadet. And she had never let on that I was having a conversation with **the** Cadet of the Year.

Saturday morning, after she had been presented her award, I interviewed her, since I was one of the Cadet PAOs and was interested in her secret to success.

Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter presents the CAP Cadet of the Year trophy to Cadet Col. Kate Whitacre.
(Photo: Cdt. 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson)



In 2001, Cadet Whitacre joined CAP at age 12. She explained, "I joined wanting to do something bigger than myself, I want to do something more than help myself." She saw that opportunity in CAP, where she could serve her community, state, and nation.

Of all her CAP achievements, she is most proud of her Carl A. Spaatz award and having attended International Air Cadet Exchange (IACE). Did she have any success tips for cadets, new or old? "Be dedicated to and for excellence," she remarked. "Get involved and remember that you get out of the program what you put into it."

Her many CAP accomplishments range from getting her FAA pilot's license in 2008 and being the only CAP cadet pilot in Indiana, to participating in four REDCAP missions and having been selected as her squadron's cadet of the year.

During her many achievements she has maintained academic excellence above and beyond. She is currently enrolled at the Indian Institute of Technology, holds a 3.9596 cumulative grade point average, and is majoring in biomedical engineering with a minor in mathematics. She currently holds a four-year academic engineering degree scholarship, and has been awarded a band scholarship as well.

Her awards cover a wide range of activities. She is a Spaatz cadet, a nationally ranked archer, a championship ice skater, merited a U.S. Naval Academy congressional nomination, and has been the Indiana Tech Band Captain for the 2008-2010 school years.

Near the end of the interview, Mr. Don Rowland, the NHQ Executive Director, stopped by and said "What an amazing person! You truly are inspiring." For me, that summed it all up, right there. Everything I had been thinking the entire time was said in those few words.

Looking at Cadet Whitacre's resume leaves me speechless. The things she has done, accomplished, and been a part of are truly life-transforming. All CAP cadets should look up to her and hold her as their role model and example for the future.

Now, I only wish we could come at least within reach of her excellence and dedication. She is a true role model and example of honor, dignity, respect, self-discipline, and excellence. 🇺🇸

An Interview with Mr. Rob Brewer

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr, CAP, Tyler Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – Established on 31 Dec 1959, the Frank G. Brewer Sr. awards have honored and rewarded the most outstanding aerospace educators in the nation. The awards are presented in four categories.



Category 1 - Civil Air Patrol Cadet Member, presented to Cadet 2nd Lt. Charles M. Hussey Jr.

Category 2 - Civil Air Patrol Senior Member, presented to Captain Frank E. Merrill.

Category 3 – Individual or Organization outside of Civil Air Patrol, presented to Space Education Initiatives from De Pere, Wisconsin.

Category 4 - Lifetime Achievement, presented to Lt. Col. John J. Lynn.

Rewarded for their outstanding volunteer service in creating successful aerospace programs for their community, state, and nation, the recipients of the four awards gathered Saturday morning at the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board meeting to receive their plaques from the National Commander, Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter.

Mr. Rob Brewer and Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr.
(Photo: Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate)

In presenting the awards to the four recipients, Gen. Courter, was assisted by Mr. Rob Brewer, son of the distinguished Frank G. Brewer Sr. After the awards ceremony, I went up to Mr. Brewer, introduced myself, and asked whether he would agree to be interviewed.

I was interested in knowing what it had been like to grow up as the son of someone like Frank G. Brewer Sr.

"Well, my dad owned his own business, so we traveled a lot," he said. Had it been difficult, traveling and being away from home? "Not really. We got to see the country and there were many opportunities while on these trips. They were a lot of fun."

Could he remember a favorite trip, or did he have a great memory of one? "First grade," he laughed. "We went to Bar Harbor, Maine. That summer was one of the best trips we had."

"Your father was a great man, very influential and inspiring," I said, "How do you feel about that?" "It's amazing to me. I was lucky to grow up with such a man as my father. There were many lessons learned and yes he was truly inspirational." I could see resurfacing Mr. Brewer's tears that had been trying to hide themselves after the presentation of the awards. Regaining his composure, he went on to say, "One of the things that really inspired me was that, after all those years and when he retired, he stayed in CAP and remained true and willing to serve the program."

At this, with gratitude, I shook his hand and thanked him for the time he had granted me, and for having come to the Conference. I thought to myself, "There is a very blessed man, having had someone like Frank G. Brewer Sr. as his father, who inspired him to reach for excellence. Mr. Frank G. Brewer Sr. was truly a role model to look up to." 🇺🇸

Leadership Through Followership

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr, CAP, Tyler Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – While at the 2009 National Board Conference, I sat in on a class about the techniques of leadership and followership taught by Technical Sgt. Charles McCowan, an Air Force Training Instructor (TI) at Lackland AFB and a serviceman with a distinguished military career. His job is to turn Air Force recruits into Airmen.

Tech. Sgt. Charles McCowan, USAF, a
Training Instructor at Lackland AFB.
(Photo: Cdt. 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson)

During the class, Tech. Sgt. McCowan stressed the importance of “getting personal” with followers. By this he meant reaching a point of comfort where followers will open up to the leader. I know this is not easy; it is hard to draw the line between getting personal yet remaining professional with cadets, maintaining a relationship where the cadets will respect the leader. This is why I was interested in discovering how to achieve that degree of establishing personal trust while still maintaining the fine leader/follower line.

After the seminar, I went up to Tech. Sgt. McCowan and asked him, “How do you get personal to the point where your followers will open up to you, while at the same time keeping the line between leader and follower?”

He replied, “Yes. As a leader, it is important to keep the line. The trick is to find the balance.” As a cadet, I consider this one of the hardest things to accomplish. Finding the balance is not at all easy. Tech. Sgt. McCowan went on to say, “You must remember that your followers will respect you more if those communication gaps are bridged. Their respect for you will grow as they begin to open up to you. The key to success is finding the equilibrium.”

After hearing this, I began to examine what I had learned from his presentation and his answers, and I was troubled. As a member of the staff at many basic encampments, I have seen cadet staff not wanting to get personal with the cadet basics because they felt it would tarnish their image. That is a feeling I have experienced in the past. Most staff members feel that getting personal with the cadet basics causes the latter to no longer “fear” or respect the staff member as much.

But there’s a flaw in that reasoning. Actually, by opening that invisible door and bridging the communication gap, the cadets will learn to respect the leader even more.

That “us and them” mindset is one that disturbs me deeply. It speaks of a thought process that is unacceptably elitist, and starts with the cadet leaders feeling themselves to be above those they lead. Yet, in fact, part of our real duties as leaders is to bridge that gap and get personal with those we lead, so that they will feel comfortable with us and our advice, and also will learn to trust us.

This was a great block of instruction. Now, after realizing the nature of the issue, and knowing what the solution to it is, I must find a way to implement the solution. Sitting in on that class not only made me aware of problems I see around me but also revealed to me my own faults, which I’ve resolved to work at changing. 🇺🇸



A Dream Come True, 3-5 September

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr, CAP, Tyler Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – The 2009 Annual Conference and National Board held a big surprise for me. Actually, I have never been very fond of space travel. I have always thought it was an amazing thing, and I enjoyed watching movies like Apollo 13 and The Astronaut Farmer. I have even visited the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas more than once. But I have never been able to consider it one of my career options.



(Left) Cdt. 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, Astronaut Eric Boe, and Cdt. 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr.

(Below) Astronaut Eric Boe paid an impromptu visit to the NCAC representatives.



However, for former Cadet Col. and National Cadet of the Year recipient Eric Boe, now an Air Force Col., it was a dream, a dream that turned into reality. After having proved himself a capable test and combat pilot, in 2000, Col. Boe was selected to begin pilot training in NASA's space program. Then, after a distinguished NASA career, he was chosen to be the pilot for the Space Shuttle Endeavour.

In November 2008, Col. Boe was able to do something that most of us can only dream of: he piloted the Shuttle Endeavour into space and docked it with the International Space Station.

Col. Boe is one of those people that, upon meeting them, all you can do is stand there and smile. I remember riding the escalators to the third floor and noticing him in his orange flight suit, across a long expanse of wall-to-wall carpeting. Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson and I asked Maj. Woodgate if it would be OK for us to walk over and see him. "Go right ahead," he said, with a smile.

We walked up to Col. Boe and stopped three or four steps from him. Maj. Woodgate walked past us, introduced himself to him, then turned and introduced us to Col. Boe. It was the perfect time, in the afternoon when most everyone was in a seminar. Col. Boe agreed to have his picture taken with us, and we just couldn't believe that it was happening to us.



Astronaut Col. Eric Boe presents his Spaatz Challenge Coin to Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter for having started his career in CAP.

Watching Col. Boe and listening to him was very rewarding. Being able to shake his hand and have our picture taken with someone so distinguished, someone who has done so much for our country was truly a blessing. Col. Boe is the perfect role model for cadets and seniors alike.

Although he has fulfilled one of his lifelong dreams and gone to outer space, he is still pushing hard and going strong. Not only does he want to go back into space, he wants to stay on the space station and work on a new Crew Launch Vehicle and Crew Exploration Vehicle – projects he helped develop during his space program training.

Meeting people at the national conference showed me the many opportunities that CAP cadets can have. I met former cadets who are now involved in law enforcement, astronauts, airplane mechanics like Col. Mary Feik, politicians, scientist, and doctors. It truly made me realize how thankful we, CAP cadets, ought to be – we have a jumpstart on life, and a chance of a lifetime offered to us by the CAP program.

Some might look at Col. Boe's resume and say, "It's time to retire!" Yet, Col. Boe continues to serve his community, state, and nation through military service and space exploration. Another one of his dreams is to land on the moon...

Might Col. Boe be the first CAP member on the moon? We shall see! But until then, we will support, admire and respect him.

(Photos: Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate) 🇺🇸

Representation at Its Best, The NCAC

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Addison Jaynes, CAP, Lakeshore Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – How can cadets get their ideas resolved? Are cadets really being represented? At the recent 2009 Annual Conference and National Board in San Antonio, Texas, the National Cadet Advisory Council (NCAC) took these commonly asked cadet questions very seriously. The NCAC spent the whole weekend resolving issues, implementing solutions, and answering questions that affect all aspects of CAP cadet organization.

As Cadet Lt. Col. Zachary King – the newly-elected NCAC Chairperson – spoke about the council's future, his listeners were assured that this year NCAC will accomplish many things.

One of the goals that the council set for itself was producing a video that would help Group/Wing/Region Cadet Advisory Councils get a jump start in the program.

Cadet Col. Kristopher Poskey, the Rocky Mountain Region representative, said, "This would help all lower branches find their roots." Many groups lack a council simply because they can't maintain them active long enough."

The video's goal is to provide educational instruction and guidance on how to develop, run, and maintain an active council. This will include proper council procedures and helpful tips on how to establish it.

The NCAC addressed several cadet-related issues that had been brewing for a time. These concerned leadership topics, chain of command, activities, recruiting, retention, and other important subjects. The NCAC is here for cadets, and this NCAC term promises to be unique, given these representatives' unwavering energy and good judgment.

Pictured here, the NCAC poses with General Courter and her staff at the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board.

The council is open to questions and suggestions at all times, and encourages all cadets to visit their website at <http://www.ncac.us/> and submit their feedback. 🇺🇸



Big-Time Brass

My experience at the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, CAP, Apollo Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – Since it moves around the country, cadets have a slim chance that it will be hosted by their wing, and a still slimmer chance of being able to attend it. I am referring to a meeting of the most prestigious and influential members in the Civil Air Patrol, the Annual Conference and National Board. This is where the action is, and it is the premier networking opportunity at a national level.

When Maj. Arthur Woodgate, the Southwest Region Director of Public Affairs, asked me to attend and report the conference, I accepted gladly and within days was traveling south from Austin on IH-35 headed for an adventure. I could only guess at how exciting it would be, but my imagination fell short of reality.

I arrived in the late afternoon of Wednesday, Sept. 2nd, to an imposing downtown San Antonio. The Conference location was within a few blocks of the Alamo, the Tower of the Americas, and the world-famous River Walk. These old and new landmarks would be the setting surrounding the Civil Air Patrol's most important yearly event. I was about to be immersed into the world of Wing Commanders, Chiefs of Staff, former and present National Commanders, and members of the National Board. In all my life, I've never seen so many Colonels in one room. Generals, too. The atmosphere was extremely pleasant and, surprisingly, they seemed very glad to meet me.

Cadets 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson (left) and Jesse Carr met Astronaut Col. Eric Boe, whom they admire.
(Photo: Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate)



At the time I wondered, "Why do they make such an effort to talk to us cadets; to visit with us and hear our opinions and ideas?" As the week progressed, and I'd had a chance to meet many of the National Cadet Advisory Council (NCAC) members, the answer became clear. Two years from now, my peers and I could well be cadet commanders at encampments, top instructors in the Cadet NCO and Cadet Officer career progression, and perhaps members of the NCAC itself, charged with making some of the critical decisions and sending suggestions and delegations to CAP's top leadership. Wisdom and far-sightedness might well be what prompts wing commanders to mentor cadets, starting a few years prior to the cadets' entering their command phase.

The morning of Thursday, Sept. 3rd, started with a prayer breakfast attended by all chaplains and other members and led by Ch, Col. Whit Woodard, CAP's Chief of Chaplains. He thanked everyone for being there, and introduced Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter, who expressed her hopes for a productive and effective conference. She thanked everyone for volunteering time, talent and money to fulfill the CAP missions and help the community, state and nation.

Then it was the guest of honor's turn, U.S. Air Force Chief of Chaplains, Ch, Maj. Gen. Cecil Richardson. He is a dynamic speaker, generous of heart, and full of humor. Somehow, he managed to be both devout and funny. He used personal anecdotes to recall times of great need when prayer had helped him as well as those he had ministered to. He recalled his long career from a small beginning, not as a human triumph but as a road of kindness and hope, traversed in faith. During the breakfast, several chaplains were called upon to say a prayer, bringing diversity

to the morning. One of them sang a *capella*, with a wonderful and rich voice that truly belonged in a big church. It was a warm and accepting occasion, perfect for setting the tone for the work facing those attending the conference.



(Left) Cadet Nelson and Col. Mary Feik. (Photo: C/2nd Lt. Jesse Carr)

(Right) Cadet Carr and Col. Mary Feik.

On Friday, Sept. 4, Cadet Jesse Carr and I accompanied Maj, Arthur Woodgate as he addressed the NCAC on the importance of promoting Public Affairs training among cadets. "Especially home-schooled cadets have a hard time rising above the prep-school graduates when their applications reach the desk of a Dean of Admissions," he said. Many NCAC members nodded their assent, some with a wry smile. I had the chance to talk with them for a few minutes, telling them about how important Public Affairs is, and how much it contributes to esprit-de-corps and unit morale. I also stressed the importance of developing good writing skills as a life-long advantage.

During the course of the Conference, new officers were elected to the National Board, awards were presented to Wing Commanders whose wings had a superior performance in the 5 fields critical to Civil Air Patrol's mission, learning labs abounded, and the National Cadet Advisory Council (NCAC) held elections to replace outgoing cadet officers.

With the preliminaries out of the way, the National Board went into action, as the NCAC worked separately. For the next two solid days, attendees would go about their voting and gathering, teaching and learning. With about 600 members present, the Conference was an enormous success. Many members enhanced their professional education in many career fields, especially Public Affairs, Cadet Programs, Leadership, and Drug Demand Reduction. Without a question, networking was at its peak.

Right before lunch, we were afforded a pleasant surprise. Air Force Col. Eric Boe, the Astronaut who was the Shuttle pilot for STS-126, arrived at the conference and we got to meet him. Featured on the front page of the Volunteer (Mar-Apr 09), Col. Boe is a former Spaatz cadet (#648), fighter pilot, and still involved in CAP.

During the afternoon, my co-worker and fellow Cadet Public Affairs Officer Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr and I went to a learning lab on leadership taught by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Charles McCowan. It was time well spent. Sgt. McCowan not only taught the practical theory of leadership, but he also demonstrated what he was speaking about.

He would present a scenario, describe how people were interacting, then show the class exactly what was wrong. Better yet, he would explain to the class how to correct it or not fall into the trap in the first place. His presentation included techniques that worked best to motivate subordinates and instill pride, obedience, and respect, as well as team spirit.

At the banquet, Lt. Col. Paul Salos is in full swing during his Frank Sinatra impersonation.



That evening, I had the pleasure of talking with Lt. Col. Johnnetta Mayhew, ten consecutive-year commander of the Civil Air Patrol Honor Guard Academy. After we had talked pleasantly for a few minutes, she said, "I would like to introduce you to a long-time friend of mine." Little did I know that I was about to be introduced to Col. Mary Feik. It was such an honor to be able to meet her; someone who has contributed so much to the Civil Air Patrol and after whom an achievement in the Cadet Program is named. What an eventful day this one was for me.

On Saturday morning, Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr and I got to sleep a little longer and were back at the conference by 7:30 a.m. The Awards Presentation Ceremony was first on the agenda. The National Commander, Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter, presented many awards, including Senior Chaplain of the Year, Senior Member of the Year, Squadron of Distinction, Exceptional Service Awards, Meritorious Service Awards, National Commander's Commendations, and National Cadet of the Year. After the awards ceremony, Cadet Carr and I split up, as we went to different learning labs (Drug Demand Reduction, Importance of a Public Information Officer to CAP's Missions, and others).

Cadet Carr and I spent the afternoon working on our articles, processing captured images, and taking a break from the non-stop activity the Conference provided. Our heads were swimming from all we had seen and experienced, but the "work break" gave us a rest. After a while, we went back to working the hallways and session rooms.

Soon after, we had returned to the hotel room to change for the evening's formal dinner. It was very colorful, with the senior members all dressed up, some of the ladies in long dresses, and many officers in mess uniform with miniature medals. We enjoyed a delicious meal, accompanied

by fantastic entertainment provided by Texas Wing's Lt. Col. Paul Salos. The latter used the experience he had gained with the act that won him top-ten in America's Got Talent, and that evening he let it all out. He sang beautifully, thrilling the audience with his very credible imitation of Frank Sinatra. From a distance, he even looked the part.

The keynote speaker, "our" Col. Eric Boe, former Spaatz Cadet, USAF Fighter Pilot and Shuttle pilot for STS-126 followed. He spoke about his time in CAP and how it had helped him accomplish his life's dreams. "I owe much to the Civil Air Patrol," he said. He has a great smile. In appreciation for his early training, he presented Maj. Gen. Amy Courter with his Spaatz Challenge Coin. Then he turned to the audience and thanked us all for our continued service to the community, state and nation. It was very touching.

Gen. Courter, in turn, presented him with a CAP Eagle. *(Photo: Maj. Arthur E. Woodgate)*

All too soon, the Texas Wing Color Guard, composed of members from the Pegasus Composite Squadron, retired the Colors and the conference was over.

I had loved every minute of it. It gave me a great chance for networking with cadets and senior members, as well as a good look at the higher echelons of the Civil Air Patrol.

(Photos: Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, except where noted.) 🇺🇸



National Flight Academy – Southwest Region

by Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, CAP, Apollo Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

SHAWNEE, Okla. – On July 18, 2009, from as far as Connecticut, the cadets and senior members came to the Southwest Region National Flight Academy in Shawnee, Okla. This day would be our familiarization with this great facility, the activity, and each other.

Following a delicious dinner, the activity director, Lt. Col. Ed Angala, welcomed us, introduced the staff, and had the cadets introduce themselves. Nearly every cadet present hoped to attend a service academy, and the group sensed that these would be exceptional days.

On Sunday, July 19, I interviewed Cadet 1st Lt. Jeremy Oberstein, from New York Wing. Did he like the Flight Academy? "I'm really liking the chance to meet people. My goal for the Flight Academy is to gain more experience in the aircraft to help me get my private pilot's license."

By the early afternoon, the Instructor Pilots (IPs) had completed the Airspace Briefing presented by Lt. Col. Crum and Angala, assisted by Capt. Medina, so everyone hit the flight-line. The instructors and their newly assigned students went through every detail of the pre-flight check, hands-on.

After dinner, we studied some more, until we were dismissed. Taking advantage of the great facility, we played almost whatever came to mind. It finally sank in, "We are really here."

Monday, July 20 was our first day of flying. Under their IP's supervision, students pre-flighted their aircraft, a skill they had learned on the previous day, and one by one the IPs taxied to the runway and took off. When they returned, the cadets emerged from their planes with revealing expressions: sometimes nervous, but always excited. They had done very well.

Ground school was very important, and the cadets were required to teach each other on an assigned portion of the curriculum, under supervision. After their studies, most of the action centered on the ping-pong, pool, and air hockey tables.

Later in the evening we got a surprise assignment. Inclement weather approached and the aircraft were still on the tarmac. All the cadets volunteered to help, but they were too many. In the end, some of the cadets and several IPs did a great job. In 30 minutes, they moved twelve CAP aircraft into a hangar with very close but safe clearance between planes (photo at right).

Tuesday, July 21 dawned clear and sunny, though the ground was wet because of the previous night's torrential rains. Students and IPs flew together for a second time. For many



cadets, these were their third and fourth flights, since cadets averaged two instructed flights a day. The IPs were pleased with their students, whose flying had improved greatly.

I took a moment to interview Cadet Tech Sgt. Jeff Sandwell, from Oklahoma Wing. Was he having fun yet? "Of course I'm having fun... I'm flying!" he said with a broad grin. In the afternoon, the cadets took their pre-solo quiz, a critical prerequisite for their solo flight. After a wholesome dinner, some cadets exercised and played, while others studied hard. The air crackled with excitement.

The morning of Wednesday, July 22 was amazing. The steel blue sky and the cool breeze that gave you goose bumps promised a perfect flying day. The IPs started giving the students more responsibilities: the cadets now preflighted the entire airplane, started the engine, taxied, took off with their IP, and left the pattern following proper sequences. After performing maneuvers as directed by their IP, the cadets entered the pattern, landed, taxied back, shut down the engine and tied down the aircraft.

On Thursday, July 23 we got a fabulous tour of Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City. It was fascinating and informative. We returned late, and after dinner prepared ourselves for the day to come, that we suspected would be important.

Friday, July 24 was really exciting. "To the airfield, on the double!" word spread like wildfire: the first cadet would solo. Cadet Senior Airman Ryan Eckles, from Texas Wing, (at left with his instructor Lt. Col. Al Maxwell) was the Academy's first cadet to solo. After his flight, I had a chance to interview

him. Had he been nervous during his solo flight? "Nervous?" he said with a smile, "No. I knew I could do it, so why should I have been nervous?" His IP, Lt. Col. Al Maxwell and the Activity Director Lt. Col. Ed Angala agreed that he had done very well.

After Cadet Eckles had shut off the engine, chocked the plane, and ran his post-flight checklist, Lt. Col. Maxwell, as is customary, ceremonially cut off his shirt-tails and the patch from the front of his shirt. After that, Eckles knelt on the tarmac and was drenched by his fellow classmates and aviators-in-training. It was a splendid way to end the working day.



(Left) Cadet 2nd Lt. Robbie "Petro" Petrosky and his instructor, John Phelps. (Center) Cadet Captain Rand "Bagger" Fowler and his instructor Dan "Blade" Crum (Right) Cadet Joshua "Crank" Womboldt with his instructor Mark "Scrooge" Gesche

Saturday, July 25 was really exciting, as we got four new Cadet Solo Pilots. First we heard that we had a cadet in the air on his solo flight. We hurried as we had much to do – fill the water buckets, ready the cameras, sharpies, and scissors, and prepare the parking area for the "ceremony."

Texas Wing's Cadet 2nd Lt. Robbie Petrosky soloed, got his shirt-tails cut away, had the solo flight information written on the cut-off portion, and was promptly drenched in grand fashion. Right after him, we heard, "There's another cadet in the air, solo." And another, and yet another. Cadets Senior Master Sgt, Joshua Womboldt and Staff Sgt. Sandwell followed each other so closely that they received their dousing in tandem. Cadet Capt. Fowler gave us more of a break, but the transition from one incoming student pilot to the next was snappy, keeping us on our toes.

Sunday, July 26 dawned cloudy, with 2,500 ft ceiling and limited visibility. Using the marginal weather as a training opportunity, student pilots went aloft with their IPs, and a few flew by themselves for their second time. The skies soon cleared.

That afternoon, four more cadets soloed, one after the other: cadets "Floats" Elliott, "Carducci" Larucci, "Horizon" Oglesby, and "Chokes" Swearengin got their "call sign" as part of their solo ceremony. Not to miss a fun opportunity, the newest four solo pilots marched, color-guard style, past Lt. Col. Ed Angala with a snappy, "Eyes... RIGHT!" Soon after the obligatory

cuttings, they kneeled in a ripple, raised their hands in exultation, and got doused.

Laughing, Cadet Elliott, said, "I had just gotten off the ground during take-off, when it hit me, 'Oh my! Now I have to land this thing... by myself!' After that, it was sheer concentration on – and execution of – what I'd been taught."

To top off the evening, we persuaded Oklahoma Wing Commander Col. Robert "Blaze" Castle to let us use his computer to watch the video "Top Gun" on the screen projector. It was a blast. As he dismissed us, Colonel Castle said, "Now, don't you dare try that in a Cessna!"

Of the 18 student pilots, 11 soloed. On average, only 50% of cadets actually solo by the end of the Activity. Even so, there isn't a single cadet who wouldn't do this all over again. 🇺🇸

(Top right) Cadets Larucci (R) and Elliott (L) after their solo flights. (Left) An elated Cadet Swearengin after his solo flight. (Photos: Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson)



A Visit to Tinker Air Force Base

by S.M. Howdy Stout, CAP, Oklahoma Wing PAO

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. – Civil Air Patrol cadets participating in a week-long National Flight Academy visited Tinker on July 23, 2009 for a closer look at the services they supplement, and may someday serve in.

The cadets, including one from the Flying Castle Composite squadron based at Tinker, were undergoing a week of flight training at nearby Shawnee airport as part of the annual National Flight Academy program, a National Cadet Special Activity (NCSA). Taking advantage of a break in their training, the cadets got a first-hand look at Tinker and the units stationed here.

"It's all part of our aerospace education program, one of our three mandated missions," explained Col. Bob Castle, commander of Oklahoma's CAP wing.

As the official Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, CAP is tasked with promoting aerospace education in addition to providing search-and-rescue services and conducting cadet programs. Lt. Col. Ed Angala, Activity Director of the Southwest Region's National Flight Academy staged in Oklahoma, said there were 33 NCSAs this summer, including six powered flight and two glider programs. The 18 cadets training at Shawnee came from nine different states and were taught by nearly a dozen instructors and staff using 11 aircraft from Oklahoma and other Southwest Region wings.

Since Oklahoma Wing's headquarters is at Tinker, the Air Force Base was a logical place for the cadets to visit. During the day-long tour, the 18 cadets visited the Navy TACAMO facility and the E-6B aircraft, watched a dog-handling demonstration by the 72nd Security Forces Squadron's K-9 unit, and received a weapons briefing from Security Forces before they toured an E-3 AWACS and the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center.

No doubt spurred by this visit, many of the cadets said they would join the Air Force. "I'm planning to go to the United States Air Force Academy, earn my college degree and become an instructor pilot for the Air Force," said Cadet Kaitlyn Fife. Joining CAP several years ago because she wanted to learn how to fly, she has 13 hours of flying time under her belt and has already soloed. "It was scary, but it was a blast," she said. "Afterward you think it's the best thing that's ever happened to you."

"I want to fly in a jet for the Air Force," said Cadet Dakota Swearengin.

Dan Crum, a CAP flight instructor and retired Air Force colonel, said tours such as these are often underrated for their beneficial effect on recruiting.

"They see this stuff, smell jet fuel and hear the sounds, and every once in a while someone comes back and says, 'I know what I want to do,'" he said. And since being a military pilot requires a college degree and an officer's commission, the goal of military flying, "Gives them a new incentive to continue their education."

During their week-long training, most of the cadets received 10 hours of flight instruction. Flying twice a day for a week, they said the training was all-involving. "It's amazing," said Cadet Adison Elliott. "Some parts are pretty intense and you get mentally tired. By the end of the day, you get in bed and you feel like you're still flying."

The instructors, too, enjoyed their time teaching. "We all have different reasons for doing this," explained Colonel Castle, who himself was a CAP cadet before joining the Air Force. "For me, it's the chance to teach cadets, fly airplanes, and give something back to the community."

(Photo: Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, Texas Wing) 



CAP Day at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

by 1st Lt. Gary Haslam, CAP, Group II PAO, Arizona Wing

PRESCOTT, Ariz. -- When Civil Air Patrol Cadet Airman 1st Class Colleen Gonzales signed up for the Civil Air Patrol Day at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) in Prescott, Ariz., little did she realize that she would be “flying” airplanes and “investigating” a crash site.

On Thursday, July 23 2009, ERAU, in Prescott, hosted the Arizona Wing's Group II, from Northern Arizona, at an all-day event. CAP cadets and senior members from Prescott, Show Low, Flagstaff and Payson spent the day touring the ERAU campus and flight-line, learning about the many aspects of aviation.



(Top) Cadets salute the flag.
(Right) At the wind tunnel, (L-R) Capt. Susan Drenkhan, Priscilla Cartiers, Cdt. Colleen Gonzales (Photo: Pete Feltz)
(Bottom) At the simulator lab, cadets got to “fly” their own Microsoft Flight Simulator program, in a networked environment. ERAU professor leads the class.



The campus tour took cadets through the engineering labs, where students create designs and then test their designs in the wind tunnel or the material stress labs.

The visiting CAP members learned how aerospace engineering impacted manned and unmanned aircraft, spacecraft, and advanced aircraft built for civilian and defense applications.



(Top & Left) Group at of the crash sites lab, with Kurt Estorez, an ERAU guide.
(Bottom) A cadet tries his hand at the Xwind flight simulator, trying to overcome cross-wind landing difficulties.



The Safety Center tour took the group outside, to a debris field staged to simulate a real airplane crash site. Cadets were challenged to explore the site and explain how they thought the crash sequence had unfolded.

The afternoon was spent at the flight-line campus at the Prescott airport, touring the level 6 FAA-certified flight simulators. Cadets got real hands-on flying time in some of the simulators that even simulated cross-wind landings.

"Good tour, especially the Xwind simulator," commented one cadet, "It was great. I liked the library, since they had added more miniature models," added another one, referring to the large miniature airplane collection housed in the ERAU library.

Cadets from Show Low traveled the farthest, having left at 3:00 am in order to arrive on time. "It was worth it, and I enjoyed the long ride to Prescott." summed it up a Show Low cadet.

(Photos: 1st Lt. Gary Haslam, unless otherwise shown) 🇺🇸

Lessons Learned at SWRSC

by Capt. Choya Shanahan, CAP, Sulphur Springs Composite Squadron, Texas Wing

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. – For me, July 11-17 July was a total unknown. Moving from the security of SLS and CLC classes to SWRSC was truly a leap of faith. I knew very few senior members who had attended this important career school, so my expectations were neither hyped nor hampered by preconceived notions. I just knew that in addition to SOC, I needed to make myself available for this training experience if I wanted to complete Level IV.

Nothing could have prepared me for the next seven days! In addition to lectures in 50-minute blocks from 0800 until 1700, there were individual and seminar group assignments that meant burning the midnight oil most nights. (And to think that I had actually planned on renting a car so I could explore New Mexico in my “free” time!) Uniforms had to be perfect. Customs and courtesies were strictly enforced. You were in a 24-hour leadership laboratory, where it was pass/fail. Seminar groups were formed based on a psychological self-evaluation that was designed to bring different personal leadership styles together as they worked on OPS plans and simulated CAP missions. Did I forget to mention the graded ten-minute speech and memo?

My seminar group was awarded “Top Seminar Group” and “Top Exercise” largely because we figured out early on how to integrate the diverse skill sets we each possessed so we could form a functioning mission staff. I learned that other Wings do things somewhat differently, but still we could work together and take the best that each one had to offer, successfully completing our assigned tasks. We actually completed our assignments two

days early, and this was a good thing because it is standard operating procedure to throw an additional assignment into the mix during the next to the last day, thereby inducing a simulated stressful environment. Thanks to our meshing-in early, our group actually had time to have fun with that last one, and I got to play the role of a vampy mayor during our presentation!

This was, by far, the most challenging training I have received since joining CAP. The friends I made during the midnight skull sessions became colleagues that I would willingly serve with during any mission. The excellence demanded in performing tasks at SWRSC is

something that I will carry back with me to my individual unit. Practicing respect for one another, under pressure, was not easy – but we achieved just that.

During those seven days, there were challenges met and integrity issues confronted, but the most memorable insight came at the Dining In, when it suddenly dawned on me that I was in the company of other volunteers who had taken the time, accepted the challenge, and done well. 🇺🇸



Change of Cadet Command

by Lt Col Jay T. Tourtel, CAP, PAO, Eagle Cadet Squadron, New Mexico Wing

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – The words rang out clearly and firmly as the centuries-old military tradition was enacted once again, this time to formalize a change of command at the cadet level. The cadet squadron was formed, the members wearing their best, as yet another cycle of the unit's life was about to start, in smooth continuation of the established order.

"Sir, I relinquish cadet command of Eagle Cadet Squadron."

"Sir, I assume cadet command of Eagle Cadet Squadron."

With those simple words, on a day when the year was officially half over, cadet command of the Eagle Cadet Squadron passed from Cadet Maj. Daniel A. Paulsen to Cadet 2d Lt. Robert L. Timmis III, during opening ceremonies at the July 2nd meeting. Lt. Col. Paul J. Ballmer, Eagle Cadet Squadron commander, officiated over the cadet change-of-command ceremony.

The outgoing cadet commander, Cadet Maj. Paulsen, has been a member of the Eagle Cadet Squadron since December 2005. During this time, he served as cadet element leader, cadet flight sergeant, cadet flight commander, cadet first sergeant and cadet deputy commander, until assuming cadet command of the squadron on June 19, 2008. He will now serve the squadron as Lt. Col. Ballmer's cadet executive assistant.

Cadet Paulsen has also served as a past delegate to the New Mexico Wing Cadet Advisory Council.

Upon Cadet Maj. Paulsen's relinquishing cadet command of the Eagle Cadet Squadron, Lt. Col. Ballmer praised him for a job well done.

The incoming cadet commander, Cadet 2d Lt. Timmis, has been a member of the Eagle Cadet Squadron since May 2007. He, too, has served as cadet element leader, cadet flight sergeant, cadet flight commander, cadet first sergeant and cadet deputy commander. He is the current delegate from the Eagle Cadet Squadron to the New Mexico Wing Cadet Advisory Council.

Upon Timmis' assuming cadet command of the Eagle Cadet Squadron, Lt. Col. Ballmer advised the new cadet commander that he had a long road ahead of him.

Cadet Timmis then announced his cadet staff: Cadet 2d Lt. Alexander M. Newberger as cadet deputy commander, Cadet Master Sgt. Liam G. Hickey as cadet first sergeant, and Cadet Master Sgt. Stephannie J. Hickey as cadet flight commander. At closing, he announced his goals for the squadron, to include an increased effort towards recruiting.

The Eagle Cadet Squadron cadet commander serves a six-month term, beginning on or about July 1st until the end of the calendar year. On January 1st of the following year, at the discretion of the squadron commander, the cadet commander's term may be extended for another six months, until the date closest to June 30 of that year.

(Top: Cdt. Paulsen; Bottom: Cdt. Timmis. Photographer: Lt Col Jay T. Tourtel) 🇺🇸



New Mexico Wing's OPSEVAL Earns an "Excellent" Rating

by Capt. Dave Finley, CAP, PAO, New Mexico Wing

FARMINGTON AIRPORT, N.M. – The New Mexico Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) completed a major statewide emergency services exercise Saturday, Sept. 19, 2009, in which a U.S. Air Force evaluation team gave the New Mexico CAP an overall rating of Excellent.

During the Operations Evaluation (OPSEVAL), CAP members demonstrated their skills in aerial search and rescue, disaster relief, and support for homeland security missions. The Air Force team directed the exercise by providing a simulated scenario involving overdue aircraft, massive wildfires, and terrorist threats.

New Mexico CAP members, working in the air and on the ground, reacted to the simulated incident reports, which presented them with multiple problems and changing scenarios.

"This was an excellent chance for our team of emergency services specialists to react to a rapidly-changing and fluid situation. Our members had to plan operations, change those plans quickly to address new priorities, and conduct operations under the stress of a swiftly-changing situation," said Lt. Col. Jon Hitchcock, the CAP Incident Commander for the exercise.

Col. Richard Himebrook, commander of the New Mexico Wing, congratulated the CAP team, saying that their excellent rating was "well deserved and showed not only what the New Mexico wing can do, but reflects well on CAP as a whole."

Participating in the OPSEVAL were more than 50 CAP members, including crews for nine aircraft as well as support and communications personnel on the ground. The operation was planned and controlled from the Farmington Airport Mission Base.

Aircraft were directed to numerous locations, including Cochiti Dam, Navajo Dam, Heron Lake, El Vado, Chaco, Silver City, and Hatch, as well as the track of a "missing" helicopter in the Four Corners area.

The CAP flight crews made visual searches of the ground, as well as taking digital photos of specified locations and rapidly providing those photos to ground personnel for detailed analysis.

The flight crews also used specialized equipment for locating Emergency Locator Transmitters. The latter function as radio beacons and are activated when an aircraft crashes.

During the exercise, the Air Force team added difficulties for participating New Mexico Wing members, such as simulating a CAP aircraft going "missing," ground personnel showing signs of extreme stress, and a forced evacuation of the command post.

"They threw us some curve balls, but our team reacted effectively and professionally," Hitchcock said. 🇺🇸



Arkansas Wing Responds to ELTs in Central and Northern Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – After a long period without any ELT missions, the Arkansas Wing was tasked with two missions in August.

On Aug. 7, 2009 a C-130 heard an ELT signal in the vicinity of Melbourne in Izard County and an aircrew from the 120th consisting of Maj. John Brandon and Joe Heinemann was dispatched by the AFRCC. Although a faint signal was detected at one point, it was not possible to track it. Apparently four other aircraft that had been asked to listen for the signal also did not hear it. When the crew returned to Jonesboro, cadets who had been assisting in the flight clinic heard an ELT on the airport that was tracked to a Cherokee 6 in the main hanger.

On Aug. 11 2009 the AFRCC received a 406 ELT signal north of Cabot. A Wing staff ground team consisting of Maj. Tom Rea, Lt. Col. Chuck Bishop, and Capt. Tommy Rea departed Little Rock at 9:20 PM drove to Smith Air Park based on the coordinates provided by the Air Force and found that the signal was coming from a newly installed ELT that had not yet been properly registered. They were unable to detect the low-power 121.5 signal from the ELT until they were within 25' of the hanger.

Prior to these missions the last time the Arkansas Wing launched resources for an ELT mission was when Maj. Blake Sasse, Maj. Joel Buckner, and Capt. Ron Wingfield located an ELT at the Country Air airpark in Lonoke County on the evening of December 29-30, 2008. This was the last mission conducted by the Wing based on an 121.5 frequency ELT detected by an Air Force satellite. The Air Force stopped monitoring that frequency on January 31st. 🇺🇸

– ooOoo –



115th's Color Guard Performs at Naturals Game

by Capt. Jonathan VerHoeven, CAP

ROGERS, Ark. – On July 31, 115th Composite Squadron's color guard performed during the National Anthem before some 6,000 fans at Arvest Ballpark in Springdale as part of the Northwest Arkansas Naturals' "Salute to First Responders" night.

Cadet Staff Sgt. Andreas Kofler led the color guard, which also included Cadet Master Sgt. Michael Deschenes, Cadet Master Sgt. Adrian Flores, and Cadet Amn. Sarah Malmo.

This is the second year the 115th has been asked to provide a color guard for the event, which honors the contributions of fire, police, and emergency medical professionals and volunteers in Northwest Arkansas.

Following the presentation, the color guard joined their families and other CAP members in the stands to watch the game between the Naturals and the Springfield Cardinals. 🇺🇸

Louisiana Wing Trains with the U.S. Coast Guard

by Maj. Michael James, CAP, Central Louisiana Composite Squadron, Louisiana Wing

ALEXANDRIA, La. – On Aug. 6, 2009, eight members of the Central Louisiana Composite Squadron visited the local U.S. Coast Guard facility. The Aids to Navigation Team (ANT) unit stationed at Colfax is primarily responsible for installing and maintaining navigation structures along the Red and Black Rivers.

The U.S. Aids to Navigation System is used to mark the waters of the United States and its territories, assisting navigation through the use of a simple arrangement of colors, shapes, numbers and light characteristics. These mark navigable channels, waterways, and obstructions adjacent to them.



(Top) Group shot. (Left) Cadets Luke Hazmark and Barry James. (Bottom) Man overboard recovery.



lights.

These aids may be anything from lighted structures, beacons, day markers, range lights, fog signals and landmarks to floating buoys. Each has a purpose and helps in determining location, getting from one place to another, or staying out of danger.

Aids to Navigation can provide a boater with the same type of information drivers get from street signs, directional signals, road barriers, detours and traffic





The U.S. Aids to Navigation System's goal is to promote safe navigation on the waterways.

The squadron's Emergency Services Officer, 2nd Lt. Robert Piercy, requested the Coast Guard to place training Emergency Locator Transmitters along the river bank. While squadron members were riding along the river aboard the 64-foot Aids to Navigation Boat (ANB), the cadets began listening to and searching for the ELT signals.

This type of training offers

a unique but very realistic scenario, since a boat could capsize or an aircraft could make an emergency landing into the river.

The Coast Guard Officer in Charge Chief Boatswain's Mate Richard Waring (below), and his crew provided the CAP group a great opportunity to train in emergency services and see first-hand how the Coast Guard operates on inland waterways. 🇺🇸

(Right) A buoy retrieval.



Louisiana Wing Training Academy

by Maj. Michael James, CAP, Central Louisiana Composite Squadron, Louisiana Wing

PINEVILLE, La. – The Louisiana Wing held its 10th Training Academy at Pineville High School, over the weekend of August 22-23. Over 90 members consisting of 21 cadets, 55 senior members, 14 instructors and 1 Air Force reservist participated in the two-day event. Attendees came from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

Second Lt. Robert Nichols (right), first-time academy director commented, "I am very pleased at the great turnout and very happy with everyone's cooperation." This was the first time he had directed the Academy, which he improved by including flight time for aircrews in the curriculum.

Nichols implemented flight time in conjunction with ground training for the aircrew students, achieving excellent air-to-ground and ground-to-air communications. Those training as mission pilots, observers and scanners took advantage of beautiful weather as they went airborne to become efficient aircrew members.

Capt. Victor Santana, Louisiana Wing Director of Cadet Programs, explained to the cadets how important it is for them to receive



proper training. He also praised the senior members who completed the Training Leaders of Cadets course for their willingness to work in the cadet program.

Courses for senior members offered at this academy included Training Leaders of Cadets (TLC), Mission Pilot, Mission Observer, Mission Scanner, ICS 300, ICS 400, and Basic IG. Cadets were offered Cadet Advanced Leadership School, Cadet

Non-Commissioned Officer School and Cadet Officer School.

Incident Command System courses taught included ICS 300 and 400. Many members took advantage of the weekend class setting for these courses, since generally government organizations offer these only during weekdays.

The basic Inspector General course was offered to assist members who conduct Squadron Unit Inspections (SUI).

(Photos: Maj. Michael James) 🇺🇸

Aerospace Eye Candy - A Fleeting Look at the Shuttle Discovery

by Capt. Matthew Ellis, CAP, Central Louisiana Composite Squadron, Louisiana Wing

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. – We meant to bring our cadets to Barksdale when the NASA shuttle flight made its stop here, but there wasn't enough time to plan it. The weather had been poor, and the mission had been postponed a couple of times, so when they did take off on their trip back to Kennedy Space Center, it was on very short notice.

The cadets had seen it before, on a previous cross-country shuttle to Florida, but it's always nice to see it again. A Boeing 747 is a big plane, but when it's carrying the shuttle on its back it looks truly gigantic.



It just doesn't look as if it could fly.

NASA must have worked it out in the wind tunnel first, because it does fly, sweet as you please. They have to cap the shuttle's rear because it would make too much turbulence otherwise, and the 747's horizontal stabilizer got supplemented on its outer edges because its vertical stabilizer needed extra help, making it look a bit awkward.



"It flies very well," said the NASA pilot, Charlie Justiz. "I love my job," he added. Afterwards, seeing it take off was amazing. "What next?" I thought, "Will elephants be flying too?" 🐘

(Top) On the tarmac, it looks as if it could never fly.
(Center) Charlie Justiz, the NASA pilot. (Right) Against all expectations, the ugly duckling took off in graceful, sure flight.

(Photos: Capt. Matthew Ellis)



My Page

This issue of the Southwest Region's **The Fly-By** follows the previous one in form, if not in content. But if you've read this issue before getting to this page, you know there is no problem with the content, other than it having been written mostly by cadets. Yes, mostly. This issue has 31 pages; 16 of them are bylined by cadets (all from Texas Wing), 11 are bylined by senior members, and the remaining 4 pages are as follows: the one you are reading now, my lead article, and two pages' worth of News Highlights that start the issue.

The cadets' articles were not the only ones of their kind that I had available. Actually, I had a lot more cadet-bylined material I could have used, except that those I chose to publish here are part of a record of sorts. In terms of diversity of coverage, the winner is Cadet 2nd Lt. Christian Nelson, a member of the Apollo Composite Squadron, Texas Wing. During the summer of 2009, on short notice, he reported the Southwest Region National Flight Academy at Shawnee, Okla., to the Activity's complete satisfaction and praises from Col. Robert Castle, the Oklahoma Wing Commander (no senior member was available to do this at the time). Nelson's daily articles on the NFA may be found at http://web.mac.com/davidanelson1/NFA-SWR/Daily_Releases.html - a website he created, set up, and maintained daily on his own, hosting it on his father's account.

Nelson was well prepared for this assignment, as he had taken the Texas Wing's LESA PAO/IO School and then I mentored him for a year so he could qualify as a C/PAO for the Air Force Space Command Familiarization Course (Florida). As planned, he attended the Florida activity less than a week after having reported the Oklahoma NCSA. That second project of Nelson's may be found online at <http://www.afspc.org/afspc/content/news.asp> - This is a website I designed, created, and maintain in my capacity of the activity's webmaster, editor, and PAO.

To my knowledge, Nelson's work up to that moment represented the first time that two NCSAs had been reported by a single cadet during the same summer. On the previous summer, two Texas Wing cadets had reported the AFSPC-FC (Florida), also for the first time.


Over the last four years, I have been mentoring cadets into the world of public affairs, having achieved considerable success (measured by their success, of course). It has been my experience that, given sufficient training and maturity, cadets can and will do a good job reporting events and producing quality editorial work. In some cases, their work has been excellent.

Thirteen of the 16 pages of cadet-bylined material above deal with the 2009 Annual Conference and National Board, held on September 3-5 in San Antonio, Texas. I picked Cadet Nelson because I had confidence in his ability. Cadet 2nd Lt. Jesse Carr made the cut for the same reason, even though he didn't have the same level of experience and exposure that Nelson had accumulated. *But, oh, could he write...*

Cadet Carr is one of those people born to write who just happen to be young. He is a natural, has a fine and discerning mind, is generous of spirit, and has an eminently engaging personality. What he lacked in experience he had abundantly in tact, energy and determination. So, a month before the event, I decided that both cadets were ready for prime time, in PA terms.

They accepted the assignment readily. In fact, they were thrilled at the opportunity, and probably would have scrubbed floors and labored endless hours to earn the privilege of going. When the moment came, they listened attentively to my directions, which were quite simple, "Offend no one, find interesting things to write about, take photos if you can, then write it all up."

Essentially, I turned loose two young literary lions on an unsuspecting crowd of over 600 high-ranking Civil Air Patrol members. And, unknowingly, the cadets made history. To my knowledge, this kind of an event had never before been reported and commented upon by cadets.

The best part is that those who've read their work probably will never think of cadet writers in quite the same way as they once did. 

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